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AUTHOR Bundy, Ola M.
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ABSTRACT

In this speech, the assistant executive secretary of the Illinois High School Association (IHSA), talks about how female athletes have been discriminated against in the past, and then discusses how athletic directors are seeking to compensate for that now. She mentions statistics of girls' participation in interscholastic sports between 1970 and 1975, a time in which participation multiplied several times. She praises both women coaches and women who volunteer to officiate at games. She refers to Title IX, but suggests that it is not that law but the efforts of women who have been trying to upgrade girls' sports, that has led to the existence of fine athletic programs for girls. (CD)

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THE HIGH SCHOOL GIRL ATHLETE'S SHARE IN THE FUTURE

By

Ola M. Bundy
Assistant Executive Secretary
Illinois High School Association

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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INTRODUCTION

It has been correctly said that the past cannot be made over, the present is in the making and the future is glorious with possibilities. You can aptly apply this to the past, present and future of the high school girl athlete.

There is no way that her past of non-existent programs and discrimination can be made over.

Her present is right now in the making as coaches, officials and administrators in girls' athletics are diligently striving to establish girls' interscholastic athletic programs in the high schools that reflect the unique needs and interests of the high school girl athlete. They are based on sound educational principles which justify their inclusion in the total educational program of the school.

And the high school girl athlete's future? Oh, how glorious is her future with possibilities. The high school girl athlete will have a glorious share in the future.

It is now judged to have been a mistake that the high school girl athlete, in the past, had relatively few opportunities to participate in athletics. The Greek dramatist, Euripedes, once said, "If we could be twice young and twice old we could correct all our mistakes." Such a choice is not possible nor perhaps should it be since the important lessons of the past help you only insofar as they strengthen your present work and give you hope in a more glorious future.

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

Girls' interscholastic athletic programs at the secondary school level in the United States have increased at a very rapid rate during the past few years. This continuing explosion in girls' athletics is dramatically noted in the increase in the number of high school girl athletes participating in girls' interscholastic athletic programs.

According to a 1974-75 biennial sports participation survey conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations, an estimated 1.3 million girl athletes participated in interscholastic athletic programs offered by their high schools during the 1974-75 school year. This represented an estimated increase of over 483,000 from the 1972-73 school year and an estimated increase of over 1,006,000 girls from the 1970-71 school year. In 1970-71, it was estimated that 294,000 girls participated in high school athletics. During the four-year period between 1970-71 and 1974-75, the number of high school girl athletes in the United States increased by 342 per cent.

During the two-year period between 1972-73 and 1974-75, the state of Illinois contributed an estimated 52,100 additional high school girl athletes to the National Federation girls' sports participation figures. During this two-year period, the number of high school girl athletes in Illinois increased by more than 338 per cent.

In 1969, the Illinois High School Association, which presently includes over 800 public and non-public member high schools in Illinois, began to increase and expand its girls' interscholastic

athletic program, there having been only minimal participation prior to that time.

You may be interested in the following figures which represent the most recent estimates of the number of IHSA member schools offering girls' interscholastic athletic programs in the various sports: Archery - 43, Badminton - 135; Basketball - 522; Bowling - 200; Field Hockey - 59; Golf - 69; Gymnastics - 125; Softball - 412; Swimming - 133; Tennis - 328; Track and Field - 639; Volleyball - 610.

In 1972-73, the IHSA began conducting state championship tournaments for girls in three sports, in Tennis, Bowling and Track and Field. Volleyball for girls was added in 1974-75. The 1975-76 school year has seen the addition of four more state tournaments for girls, in Field Hockey, Golf, Softball and Swimming. Four more girls' state tournaments will be added during the 1976-77 school year, in Archery, Badminton, Basketball and Gymnastics. This means that within the five-year period from 1972-73 to 1976-77, the Illinois High School Association will have implemented twelve girls' athletic state tournaments. This is one more state tournament for girls than the Association presently conducts for boys, the eleven boys' athletic state tournaments being established during the sixty-year period from 1914 to 1974.

Illinois is just one state in fifty. The National Federation participation figures reveal that you and your state are also working and contributing to this rapid increase in girl athletes and girls' athletic programs. You will undoubtedly find a similar kinship with the work that is being done in Illinois, primarily

by women who have committed themselves to ensuring that the future of the high school girl athlete is glorious with possibilities.

As you know, in Illinois, we appreciate some beautiful farms, farmland and farmers. In the central part of Illinois, where the Association office is located, there is a Farmer MacDonald (there has to be or I wouldn't be able to tell this story) and you remember how it goes! Old MacDonald had a farm, e-i-e-i-o, and on this farm he had a pig, e-i-e-i-o, with an oink, oink here and an oink, oink, there...and on this farm he had a hen, e-i-e-i-o, with a pluck, pluck here and a pluck, pluck there. Well, one day the pig and the hen got together and they were talking (as pigs and hens often do) and they said, "My, this is a wonderful, wonderful farm that Farmer MacDonald has provided for us. It is a wonderful place to live. There ought to be something we could do to show Farmer MacDonald how much we appreciate his wonderful farm. What could we do for Farmer MacDonald?" They thought and thought and finally, the hen said, "I know. Tomorrow morning, let's give Farmer MacDonald a breakfast of bacon and eggs!" The pig replied, "Hold on a moment, a breakfast of bacon and eggs might be alright for you, but it sure isn't for me. For you, it means involvement, but for me it means total commitment."

There is definitely a difference between involvement and commitment. As I share with you the work that is being done in girls' interscholastic athletics in Illinois, perhaps you will see why I say that in Illinois, the women working in high school girls' athletics are committed to those programs. This does not mean

there are no men involved in the program ... there are ... and their help and support is greatly needed and appreciated. But, for the most part, the real commitment in high school girls' athletics in Illinois is on the part of the women and they are doing one SUPER job.

GIRLS' ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

In Illinois, Girls' Athletic Directors are called Girls' Sports Coordinators. In the beginning, the women weren't quite ready to be called "Girls Athletic Directors" so they called themselves "Girls Sports Coordinators." Now, the Girls' Sports Coordinators find themselves in the position that without the correct title, Girls' Athletic Director, their decision-making power is lessened since the Coordinators make recommendations to the Athletic Directors, who approve them or reject them. Recommendations approved by the Athletic Directors are then submitted to the principals for final decision.

Be that as it may, except for variances in the role that might exist in some schools, the Girls Sports Coordinators are doing the real, solid work of girls' athletic administration in the high schools in Illinois, and it is their commitment and work I wish to share with you.

Some groups of Girls Sports Coordinators in the state are more organized than others. This is directly related to the time that programs for girls in athletics have existed in area high schools and the depth of those programs. As programs develop, there arises a definite need for Girls Sports Coordinators to meet regularly to "coordinate" the girls' athletic programs in their conference or

league schools.

The pattern has been to adopt the same conference alignments as used in boys' athletics. In fact, this alignment has proven to be the most effective mode of operation for scheduling and administering girls' interscholastic competition. It has also stimulated a good "spirit of rivalry" among the girls for them to compete against the same schools as do the boys.

You would be very much impressed by the Constitution and By-laws and Operating Codes that exist for the Girls Athletic Divisions in the high school conferences in Illinois. You would also be impressed by the amount of time, effort, sweat and perhaps even tears that the women put into the work of developing these girls' athletic administrative tools. They cover everything, from philosophy and standards right down to whether or not the host school furnishes locks for the lockers.

All girls' interscholastic athletic contests in IHSA member schools are regulated by provisions included in the IHSA Constitution and By-laws. These prevail, but the actual determination of who plays who and the more specific rules governing girls' interscholastic competition at the local school level are determined by the conferences. You can see from this why, at times, the women coordinators experience some frustration in decision-making.

For the most part, the Girls Sports Coordinators direct the girls' athletic activities in the conference schools. In their individual schools, they do everything from scheduling the buses, contracting officials and supervising girls' home events to making sure there are locks for the lockers for the visiting team.

These women are vital to the smooth administration of the girls' athletic program. They give leadership to the girls' athletic coaches in their own school and direct the school's program toward the common goals of the total girls' athletic program in the conference. Their specific duties can be found in any good girls' athletic administration handbook. The spirit in which these women carry out their duties in Illinois cannot be "bested" anywhere, not even among the ranks of the men athletic directors.

GIRLS' ATHLETIC COACHES

Again, as I share with you the work of the girls' athletic coaches in Illinois, it is the women coaches who receive the credit for the great amount of work that is being done in coaching girls' teams. There are some men who coach girls' teams, but they are partaking in programs where due credit must really be given to the women coaches. And so this portion of my presentation is devoted to the outstanding work of the women coaches done in behalf of the high school girl athlete.

Most of the women who presently coach girls' athletic teams in Illinois are still physical educators. The response of the women coaches to the challenges of coaching girls' athletic teams has been almost unbelievable.

In many schools, the lone girls' physical education teacher, has now become THE coach in all the three, four, five and yes, even six different athletic sports offered in the school's girls' athletic program during the school year. With such coaching loads in addition to their regular teaching duties, it has been amazing

to observe the results these women are realizing in their coaching.

Not all the women coach three or four different sports during a school year, but there are very few women who coach only one sport.

The women are working very hard at doing a good job of coaching. They devote many long hours to coaching, often with little monetary reward. But, I have yet to hear of a woman coach who is coaching a girls' athletic team because of the money she receives for coaching!

A woman coach devotes many off-season hours to attending clinics, workshops and taking courses to learn more about the sports she is coaching. She is often frustrated in this respect since many of these sources of help are primarily male-oriented. And, one of the things the woman coach knows is that coaching girls, even in the same sport, is often much different from coaching boys. Many women coaches have taken advantage of the help offered them by men coaches who have been very willing to share their experience and expertise with the women coaches.

The growth in the abilities and capabilities of the women coaches has been tremendous. The high school girl athletes on their teams are exhibiting a high level of skill proficiency on the playing court and playing field.

In addition to actually coaching, these women have done considerable work and made many valuable contributions to the growth of the sports in their own school and community, as well as in their conference and at the state level.

The Operating Codes for the various sports in the conferences

reflect the work of the women coaches, as do the Terms and Conditions at the state level for the girls' state championship tournaments, which are the result of suggestions and ideas of coaches and others. These are annually considered by IHSA Advisory Committees appointed for each girls state tournament activity and composed mostly of coaches.

The women coaches are the women who make sure that the particulars of competition in a sport are fair and significant for the teams that participate. Their Operating Codes include such items as whether or not a girl can play on both the varsity and junior varsity teams at the same time, how many girls comprise a team and order of events. Usually, the women coaches in a particular sport in a conference meet together and formulate recommendations in their sport for the conference, which are then submitted to the women coordinators.

Although the woman coach is vital to so many phases of the girls' athletic program, coaching is her primary responsibility. She is the person who is working most directly with the high school girl athlete. She is the person who has the influence with the girls that is so important in how they play the game, how they win, how they lose, how they respect the decisions of the officials. She is the vital influence for good sportsmanship and good play.

The woman coach in Illinois is doing an outstanding job and the high school girl athletes share in the present is evidence of that fact.

GIRLS ATHLETIC OFFICIALS

In Illinois, there are more men involved in girls' athletic

officiating than in any other phase of the girls' athletic program. There are over 2,000 IHSA Girls Athletic Officials at the present time and less than 25 per cent are men, the men being mostly involved in the officiating of girls' basketball and girls' softball. For the most part, these men are involved in officiating, officiating boys' games, girls' games, it makes little difference to them.

But, again, because the women officials were on the girls' athletic scene first and because the women officials are carrying out the major work in girls' athletic officiating, this portion of my presentation is devoted to them.

Many women have answered the call to serve in the work of girls' athletics through officiating. Many of these women officials are young, many are "unweathered" which is something that will only come with years of officiating experience. Fortunately, some of our women officials have a background of experience and training under DGWS rules and officiating standards.

The women officials are working very hard to fulfill their important responsibilities in the girls' athletic program. And you should keep in mind that these women officials, perhaps even more than the women directors and women coaches, are the women who are committed to the girls' athletic program because of a deep desire to serve. These women are devoted to enforcing the game rules, keeping the game under control and thereby ensuring that whichever team wins, it has been a fair contest.

Women officials are indeed providing an important service in the girls' athletic program. Their livelihood certainly does not

depend on the money they receive for their services. These women often travel great distances, give up a relaxing evening at home, spend hours traveling to and from a game, and arrive well ahead of game time to perform their service.

Other than actually officiating the game, these women spend many hours studying the rules, they attend IHSA-sponsored rules meetings which are not usually located near where they live, they attend officiating clinics that might be offered and attend games when they are not officiating to observe other officials. They receive little thanks for their work and too often their excellent officiating is not even recognized as the spectators, in particular, disagree with any call the official makes against their own team.

The only real recognition the women officials might receive comes when the coaches give them high ratings and rankings and they are promoted or selected to officiate conference tournaments, invitational tournaments or state tournament games.

CONCLUSION

It has been said of George Washington that he, "found the union a dream and left it a reality." A similar tribute can be given to the women who are the committed workers in high school girls' interscholastics. They found girls' athletics a dream and their hard work has made girls' interscholastic athletics a reality. Many of you here today deserve this tribute.

Victor Hugo once said, "No army can withstand the strength of an idea whose time is come"

The time has come for the high school girl athlete. High school

girls' athletic programs are a reality. There is no strength great enough to return them to a state of non-existence.

The high school girl athlete's share in the future is assured because of the work that women coordinators, coaches and officials are doing, the work they will continue and the work they will undertake in the future.

Women coordinators, whether their titles are changed or not, may look forward to having a greater voice in decision-making in girls' athletics. Why? Because hard work earns such rewards which in turn bring even more work.

The women coordinators will be needed to influence the sharing of ideas and to develop good relationships between the conferences. They will very likely work together on a statewide basis to find better means and methods in girls' athletic administration. Their work will be needed to administer girls' state tournament events and to raise standards at all levels in girls' athletics on a statewide basis.

Women coaches will gain confidence in their coaching abilities. Their attentions will be turning more toward uniting as a group statewide in the goal of promoting better coaching techniques and coaching standards.

Hopefully, the women coaches will have a strong influence in keeping incidents of unsportsmanlike conduct of spectators, fellow coaches and players at a minimum. As the women coaches adjust to the importance of their work in girls' athletics, they will coach their girls' teams to win, but not at all costs and not at the cost of showing disrespect for the decisions of the officials or even impatience with the job the officials are doing. The coaches

themselves will influence better standards and practices for all women coaches.

The women officials will be engaged in the work of improving themselves. Somehow, state associations must find ways to help the officials with their self-improvement so there can be both "quality and quantity" among girls athletic officials. And, the women officials must continue to be patient with coaches and players and yet learn to be more firm in enforcement of rules and game control.

So far, you have not heard me mention Title IX. It is because I believe that Title IX came on the educational scene too late to receive the credit for the way in which the high school girl athlete is sharing in the present. I believe the schools and women working in the girls' program deserve the credit.

In many respects, Title IX assures the high school girl athlete her "fair" share in the future. In some respects, it caters to the individual, exceptionally-skilled girl with little care of how girls being permitted to play on boys' teams and vice versa, may prove detrimental to the overall equal opportunities of the high school girl athletes as a class or group.

You have heard much about the enforcement of Title IX but please keep in mind that there is still no law that requires a school to offer athletic programs for either boys or girls. It is still a privilege for the high school girl athlete to play on a team representing her school. She must also assume a responsibility in her own future. She must keep her participation in the proper perspective. She must devote her attentions to her regular education first and her athletic education second. Hopefully,

she will want to play by the rules and will compete always with the spirit of good sportsmanship, showing respect and appreciation for her teammates, her opponents, her coaches and for the officials and their decisions. Hopefully, she will do all of these things, continuing to enjoy and appreciate her privilege of participation in athletics, whether or not her team wins the game, the conference title or the state championship. In this way, the high school girl athlete will be sharing in the responsibility for determining the high school girl athlete's own share in the future.

As Benjamin Franklin once said, "Well done is better than well said." And the women are doing very well in assuring the high school girl athlete her "fair" share in the future. Her future does not depend on Title IX or its enforcement. Both Title IX and the high school girl athlete's future depend on the willingness of the women to continue their good work as girls' athletic directors, girls' coaches and girls' officials. John Ruskin has said, "The highest reward for man's toil is not what he gets for it but what he becomes by it."

This does not mean that every girls' athletic director, every girls' coach and every girls' official will be the best. Better than good is the goal. For in turn, not every high school girl athlete will be a Babe Didrickson Zaharias. The goal is for the high school girl athlete to train well, play well, win or lose well and to live well, to live a more full and meaningful life because of her high school girls' interscholastic athletic experiences.

JUST THINKING

"Nobody can really guarantee the future.
The best we can do is size up the
chances, calculate the risks involved,
estimate our ability to deal with them,
and then make our plans with confidence."

-- Henry Ford II

The high school girl athlete's share in the future is glorious with possibilities. And it is all because the women who have committed themselves to working in girls' athletics have assured Farmer MacDonald that in girls' athletics he will have bacon for breakfast and fried chicken for supper.